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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/870,821	06/01/2001	Hisashi Semba	04853.0073	8411

22852 7590 12/22/2003

FINNEGAN, HENDERSON, FARABOW, GARRETT & DUNNER
LLP
1300 I STREET, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20005

EXAMINER

SAUCIER, SANDRA E

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1651

DATE MAILED: 12/22/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/870,821

Applicant(s)

SEMBA ET AL.

Examiner

Sandra Saucier

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 September 2003.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 5-24 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 5-21 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 22-24 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 01 June 2001 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claims 5-24 are pending. Claims 22-24 are considered on the merits. Claims 5-21 are withdrawn from consideration as being drawn to a non-elected invention.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103

Claims 22-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US 6,337,196 or WO 98/30711 [N].

The claims are directed to a method comprising

dissolving prussic acid in an unsaturated, water immiscible organic solvent,

saturating the solvent containing prussic acid with water,

forming a reaction mixture with immobilized hydroxynitrile lyase having a water content of 10% or more and a liquid comprising a carbonyl compound, the saturated solvent containing prussic acid, wherein the liquid is one phase.

Dependent claims are directed to the use of an immobilization carrier capable of retaining water, and the use of sufficient water to prevent release of water from the immobilized hydroxynitrile lyase.

US 6,337,196 discloses an enzymatic method of synthesizing optically active cyanohydrins from hydrogen cyanide and a carbonyl compound using hydroxynitrile lyase immobilized on cellulose with a water content of 40% in a single phase of ethyl acetate saturated with aqueous buffer (example 2) .

comprising:

providing hydroxynitrile lyase immobilized on cellulose with a water content of 40% in a reaction vessel,

adding water saturated ethyl acetate and a carbonyl compound (benzaldehyde) to the reaction vessel,

adding prussic acid (anhydrous hydrocyanic acid) to the reaction vessel, reacting for one hour to give 96% yield of cyanohydrin.

US 6,337,196 and WO 98/30711 have substantially the same disclosure.

The primary references lack the disclosure of saturating the immiscible solvent after the addition of prussic acid, but rather add the saturated solvent and prussic acid separately.

Since prussic acid is an aqueous solution of hydrogen cyanide, it already contains almost 100% water. It cannot be further saturated with water. Thus, it makes no difference to the total water content of the reaction mixture whether the immiscible solvent is saturated with water before or after the addition of prussic acid. All that matters is the final water content of the reaction mixture. See Table 1 of the specification.

With regard to the limitation of claim 24, since the water content of the reaction mixture in the cited references appears to fall within the water content of the reaction mixture in the claimed method, it is reasonable to expect that the same water content is sufficient to prevent release of water from the immobilized lyase.

One of ordinary skill in the art would have realized that the saturation of the immiscible organic solvent may have been performed either before or after the addition of prussic acid, and that the reaction mixture would have essentially the same % of water in either case.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

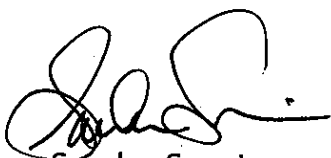
A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is

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filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

To aid in correlating any papers for this application, all further correspondence regarding this application should be directed to Group Art Unit 1651. The supervisor for 1651 is M. Wityshyn, (703) 308-4743. The normal work schedule for Examiner Saucier is 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM Monday and Tuesday and 8:30 AM to noon on Wednesday.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Sandra Saucier whose telephone number is (703) 308-1084. Status inquiries must be directed to the Customer Service Desk at (703) 308-0197 or (703)-308-0198. The number of the Fax Center for the faxing of official papers is (703) 872-9306.



Sandra Saucier

Primary Examiner

Art Unit 1651

December 16, 2003